



A MONTHLY JOURNAL
FOR IOWA EDUCATORS

School Leader Update

June 2013

Smarter Balanced practice tests

Teachers, parents and students in Iowa and across the country can now access new online practice tests that are aligned to common math and literacy standards adopted by Iowa and 44 other states.

The practice tests provide a preview of the types of questions that will be featured on the Smarter Balanced assessments beginning in the 2014-15 school year. The Smarter Balanced assessments are being developed by a consortium of states, including Iowa.

Iowa will consider the assessments as a possible replacement for the Iowa Assessments but has not adopted them.

The practice tests follow a pilot test that has taken place in Iowa schools on a voluntary basis.

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A bittersweet moment: Time to say 'goodbye'

It's humbling to think of all the Iowans I've met, served with, and worked with over the last two and a half years.

You welcomed me into your communities, your classrooms – and even into your Twitter feeds.

You showed me how much you believe in your teachers, your community schools and this state's treasured tradition of educational excellence.

You also showed me that you want the best schools and the brightest futures for Iowa's young people – and that you were willing to do whatever it takes to get there. It has been an exciting, challenging and sometimes difficult couple of years working together to position Iowa's good school system for greatness.

In terms of making policy decisions, there have been starts and stops, countless debates and uncertainty at times. But I'm so proud that we've just reached a major turning point with the passage of this year's education reform bill.

With this bill, Iowa takes a monumental and unprecedented leap forward in empowering the teaching profession through teacher leadership pathways. We know that great education systems are built with great educators, and this legislation raises and honors the teaching profession in much the same way that we honor our children and our state's future.

There's a lot of work to do to implement and build upon this tremendous legislation, and I know it will not be easy.



Jason Glass, Director

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Student joins State Board of Education

Governor Branstad has appointed Edgar Thornton as the new student member to the State Board of Education effective May 1. Thornton, an 11th grade student at Iowa City High School, will serve as the State Board's nonvoting student member for one year. Thornton will replace McKenzie Baker of Forest City.

The other State Board members are **Rosie Hussey** of Clear Lake, **Charles Edwards** of Des Moines, **Diane Crookham-Johnson** of Os-kaloosa, **Sister Jude Fitzpatrick** of West Des Moines, **Michael Knedler** of Council Bluffs, **Valorie Kruse** of Sioux City, **Mike May** of Spirit Lake, **Max Phillips** of Woodward, and **LaMetta Wynn** of Clinton.

The State Board is made up of nine voting members who serve six-year terms and one nonvoting student member who may serve a one- or two-year term.

IDEA compliance determinations

In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Iowa Department of Education this summer will make annual determinations for each school district and area education agency to ensure there is compliance with, and implementation of, IDEA Part B requirements.

Determinations for FFY 2011 (2011-2012) will be based on compliance indicators B4, B13, B15 and B20 for districts and B9, B11, B12, B13, B15 and B20 for area education agencies. Determination letters will be emailed to district superintendents and area education agency special education directors during the month of June.

IDEA Part B Data Profiles for districts and area education agencies will be available on EdInsight, and redacted versions will be posted to the Iowa Department of Education's website by June 1. For more information, contact the department's Meredith MacQuigg at meredith.macquigg@iowa.gov or 515-281-4705.

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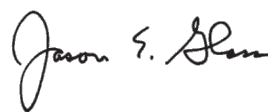
But I am more optimistic than ever about the future of Iowa's education system because I've personally witnessed the unwavering commitment our educators, schools, parents, and leaders are making for the sake of the state's future, and especially its young people, every day.

I will be leaving Iowa at the end of June to become the superintendent of Eagle County Schools in Colorado. This is a bittersweet goodbye for me.

I can't fully express how grateful I am for the opportunity I've had to contribute to the state's future and to work under the leadership of Gov. Branstad.

Please know that I wish you all the best as Iowa continues down the path to world-class schools.

Have a wonderful summer, and once again, thanks for all you do on behalf of our state, our schools, and our students.



Educators encouraged to volunteer for Site Visit Teams

Iowa educators are encouraged to volunteer to participate in the Iowa Department of Education school improvement site visits scheduled for the 2013-14 school year. Serving on a site visit team has many benefits. It helps participants understand accreditation expectations, the preparation process, and allows educators to obtain in-depth information and examples from other districts/schools. The site visit team member invitation is located at:

http://eduateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=11740&Itemid=2517

For technical assistance, contact the department's Elizabeth Calhoun at elizabeth.calhoun@iowa.gov.

Continued from page 1, Smarter Balanced

The practice tests focus on mathematics, English language arts and literacy in grades 3-8 and 11. Through them, students can experience the features of an online test and teachers and parents can gain insight into how the test will assess students' mastery of core subjects.

The tests preview the types of questions that will be featured in the actual assessment, focusing on extended activities that challenge students to apply their knowledge and skills to respond to real-world problems. The practice tests do not include all the features of the operational assessments. For example, students and teachers will not receive reports or scores from the practice tests. The practice tests also will follow a fixed-form model, even though the Smarter Balanced assessments will be computer adaptive, meaning no two students will receive the same set of questions.



The tests were developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, a multi-state effort to create a common, innovative assessment system for math and literacy that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The Common Core standards make up the backbone of the Iowa Core standards in math and literacy.

The goal of the Smarter Balanced assessments is to measure achievement and growth toward college and career readiness. The tests measure complex, higher-order skills, such as critical thinking, instead of basic skills and simple fact recall. The computer-adaptive format also will return results more quickly than a paper-pencil test.

The consortium's work is guided by the belief that a high-quality assessment system aligned to high standards can provide information and tools for teachers and schools that help improve teaching and learning throughout the school year and help students succeed.

The free practice tests are available on the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium website: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/>

Data and Reporting

C-Plan application to open in June

In the beginning of June, the C-Plan application will open for all districts, nonpublic schools, and public schools in need of assistance (SINA 4+) based on their 2012-2013 SINA designation. The application will open in the fall for SINA 1, 2, and 3 schools and districts in need of assistance (DINA).

The C-Plan application should be used by districts and schools to enter and certify data for the following plans:

Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) – district/nonpublic school certification by September 15.

Annual Progress Report (APR) – district/nonpublic school certification by September 15.

Iowa Core Implementation Plan – district/nonpublic school certification by September 15.

District Developed Service Delivery Plan (DDSDP) – district certification by September 15 for districts having a site visit during the 2012-2013 school year; district approval of assurances by September 15 for all districts.

Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA) – public school certification by either July 1 or November 1 for SINA 4+; public school certification by November 1 for SINA 1, 2, 3.

Districts in Need of Assistance (DINA) – district certification by November 1.

For more information about C-Plan, including changes for the 2013-2014 school year and updates on new user training, please visit the C-Plan website at http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2583&Itemid=4675.

Please contact your school improvement consultant if you have any questions:

Keystone AEA – Holly Barnes, holly.barnes@iowa.gov, 515-242-6173

AEA 267 – Eric Heitz, eric.heitz@iowa.gov, 515-281-4726

Prairie Lakes AEA – Cindy Butler, cindy.butler@iowa.gov, 515-281-5332

Mississippi Bend AEA – Holly Barnes, holly.barnes@iowa.gov, 515-242-6173 or Barb Byrd, barb.byrd@iowa.gov, 515-250-4724

Grant Wood AEA – Fred Kinne, fred.kinne@iowa.gov, 515-281-6293

Heartland AEA – Beth Happe, beth.happe@iowa.gov, 515-281-3427

Northwest AEA – Beth Calhoun, elizabeth.calhoun@iowa.gov, 515-281-8170

Green Hills AEA – Janet Boyd, janet.boyd@iowa.gov, 515-281-3198

Great Prairie AEA – Barb Byrd, barb.byrd@iowa.gov, 515-250-4724

Data and Reporting continued



Competent Private Instruction (CPI) Handbook for 2013-14

CPI handbook for the 2013-2014 school year and other supporting documents will be available as soon as possible on the website at http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=301&Itemid=1335.

For additional information, contact the department's Elizabeth Calhoun at 515-281-0171 or elizabeth.calhoun@iowa.gov.

Home-schooling deadline nears for reporting student progress

The deadline for parents to report the results of standardized tests, portfolio assessment report, or accredited correspondence school report card to the resident district is June 30. Districts shall submit form C-1 (found on page 22 of the Competent Private Instruction handbook) to the Iowa Department of Education for each student who has a national percentile rank of 30 or below in any one of the test areas indicated or who has less than six months' progress on national grade equivalent from one year to another. (See 299A.6 for further details.) Districts shall not report test scores to the department for students who are served by licensed teachers or who were younger than age 7 on Sept. 15 or older than age 16 of the current school year. For additional information, contact the department's Elizabeth Calhoun at 515-281-8170 or elizabeth.calhoun@iowa.gov.



Early Childhood Preschool Programs

GOLD Assessment year-end procedures

Steps to assist programs in completing the year-end process to close out the GOLD Assessment System are now available. The end-of-the-year data clean-up document will assist programs using GOLD in making decisions regarding reports, as well as archiving or deleting child files. In addition, you will find the location of upcoming or archived webinars that provide more detailed information at this site: http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=940&Itemid=1279



New programs wishing to participate in the Iowa GOLD license also are encouraged to visit the website to review the GOLD Online Registration Information and FAQs. Follow the link in this document to complete the registration process.

Programs with an existing account renewing their agreement with Teaching Strategies will be contacted by the Teaching Strategies bureau during the next two months.

For information about the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, contact Penny Milburn at penny.milburn@iowa.gov or 515-281-7844 or Amy Stegeman at amy.stegeman@iowa.gov or 515-725-2273.

Preschool verification visits for 2013-14

The Iowa Department of Education is scheduling the 2013-2014 verification visits for the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. A department staff member will contact each district in order to collect necessary information and to finalize the visit dates. To assist districts in preparing, the department has posted the verification visit checklists at: http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=940&Itemid=1279

For information about the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, contact Penny Milburn at penny.milburn@iowa.gov or 515-281-7844 or Amy Stegeman at amy.stegeman@iowa.gov or 515-725-2273.

Districts identified for Desk Audits

A complete list of districts receiving an Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards desk audit in 2013-2014 is now posted. Districts receiving the desk audit also will find a desk audit checklist posted at the following site: http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=940&Itemid=1279

For information about the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, contact Penny Milburn at penny.milburn@iowa.gov or 515-281-7844 or Amy Stegeman at amy.stegeman@iowa.gov or 515-725-2273.



Legislative Update

Contact Mike Cormack for all legislative items: mike.cormack@iowa.gov or 515-281-3399.

Cormack at the Capitol

Khakis, concerts and reform: Getting outside our comfort zone

Sometimes it pays to get outside of your comfort zone. Recently, I had the opportunity to attend my first concert at Wells Fargo Arena to see Kenny Chesney. I may have qualified for the Geek of the Year award when I attended in khakis; I attended another event just prior to the performance. Put another way, imagine a crowd with thousands of people in blue jeans and yours truly, styling and profiling as the man in tan trousers.

Enhancing my geek status, I haven't downloaded or purchased a single song by Kenny, either. Many of the songs that fans were singing word for word with him were absolutely new to me. While I like virtually every type of music (if virtually every type of music isn't defined as including opera), country isn't at the top of my list. That being said, what fun that concert was and what admiration I have for the talent and energy of Mr. Chesney. I would absolutely go back if he came to town. And since he inducted every last person in the building as a member of his "No Shoes Nation," I am part of the club. It was a blast!



Both Kenny Chesney and Jimmy Buffett do a great job of presenting the image of life as a worry-free drift in the water to the next perfect destination. Unfortunately, life isn't as simple as that. But, while serious tasks are before us in education, maybe that is the attitude we should all have going forward. Compromise is not a dirty word. Gridlock is. Compromise is consensus, and that's a much more laid-back approach than shouting at each other. Compromise is the arrival of a decision with action to come. Our state decided to act this year, not score political points or blame one another.

At the conclusion of this legislative session, our state decided to steer the ship in the same direction. The political arguments waned, and [HF 215](#) became law with a 40-10 vote in the Senate and a 95-0 vote in the House. The conference committee report will become the law of our state with the governor's signature; it goes into effect July 1. With an unprecedented allocation of resources and strong direction on where we will move forward with new policy, this is the historic year for education that I had hoped for and wrote about last month.

The final result of this legislation includes 2 percent allowable growth next year with a 2 percent bonus on top of that. In addition, the second year includes 4 percent allowable growth. Iowa Learning Online will receive \$1.5 million to expand learning opportunities to students who have interests in classes not provided by their local school. The school year will now be measured by either 1,080 hours or 180 days, with the choice being made by the local school board depending on individual needs. Measures for home-schooled and private school students were included, granting flexibility for those systems. An online job posting system for educators statewide will provide taxpayer savings for local districts and ease for job applicants in applying to Iowa schools.

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Legislative Update continued

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Pilot projects for competency-based instruction will further explore opportunities for students. Assessment and evaluation changes will be on the horizon. High-need schools will receive additional dollars. After-school programming will be further studied to see the benefits it may provide to our students. Scholarships to talented new teachers will be provided. This, in its own right, is comprehensive change for Iowa education.

I encourage you to review the legislation. Remember, it modifies existing code so it should be read in that light.

With all of that being said, the heart and soul of education reform will be made by the multi-year commitment to teacher leadership and compensation. The first year will be a planning year, and \$3.5 million has been allocated for planning grants to the local districts that opt to join this system. Beyond the first year, school districts that decided to join this effort will be rewarded with over \$300 per student in new financial assistance annually. Individual teachers will share in the leadership of the school, and working in isolation will be phased out to be replaced with collaborative efforts. Utilizing either the career leadership path proposed by the governor, the instructional coach model added by the Iowa General Assembly or a comparable pathway to either of those, teaching in Iowa has changed. The minimum wage of teachers will increase to \$33,500 under this program, and teacher leaders will receive increases of salary with additional responsibility.

Iowa will be the first state to do this on a statewide basis. Be assured, we are all going to be working outside our comfort zones. The bottom line of all of these measures is that Iowa will be making a serious push to return to our status as the leader in the United States for education. Most important, we want to provide the best educational opportunity for the children of our state.

I know some reading this column have been enthusiastic supporters of this legislation, others have reserved judgment and even some have been critical. Still, this legislation has benefited from all views. The work ahead is daunting, but the benefits will be tremendous.

I don't own cowboy boots or a hat. But I am glad I stepped outside my comfort zone and went to that concert. Instead of being comfortable as a state, let's be successful as a state. HF 215 raises the pirate flag on the status quo and lets this vessel move forward. Let's work together to find that great destination. The political system has given us that opportunity in this state. Let's have the joy of a great concert or ballgame be matched by the joy of changing lives through our collective work. It's time for Iowa to lead again with that spirit.





Legal Lessons

Contact Nicole Proesch for all Legal Lessons items: nicole.proesch@iowa.gov or 515-281-8661

A summer of good conduct, driver's ed and more

School's out for the summer!

Summer is finally here. I used to look forward to summer camp at Camp Hitaga, taking sewing lessons (don't get any ideas – for the most part I learned to hem things, which comes in handy since I am so short), and watching Little House on the Prairie on TBS with my older and, of course, smarter sister (if she were reading this, she would enjoy that compliment). I look back on those days now and wonder why I wanted to grow up so fast so I could spend my summer working. Ah, yes, we don't know how good we had it until that time is gone. I hope you are all able to enjoy your summer break with some much needed relaxation. Many of you are probably planning summer vacations or possibly a class trip over the summer. Others are preparing for summer school or driver's education classes. Here are some legal lessons to start off the summer.

Good conduct rules over the summer? You bet.

Do you think good conduct rules don't apply over the summer? Think again. I wanted to share this old case with you that serves as a reminder that even though a student is on summer break, a school's good conduct rule can subject the student to discipline for behavior over the summer in the right set of circumstances.

In 2000, the Iowa Court of Appeals held that a district's good conduct rule applied to the conduct that occurred over the summer, outside the state, outside the country, and was otherwise legal. The facts of this case involved a 17-year-old student who drank beer in Germany (where the legal age to drink is 16) while on a summertime trip arranged by the school district, approved by the board, and chaperoned by a high school teacher. All students were informed before they left on the trip that if any of them drank beer or alcohol while in Germany, they would be punished under the district's good conduct rule. Finally, since this was not the student's first violation of the good conduct rule, the court found the board's punishment of a 12-month suspension from all extra-curricular activities was not unreasonable.

Here is a link to the full case: *Martin v. Marshalltown Community School District*, #00-154 (Iowa App. 2000).

http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=15358&Itemid=4434



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Legal Lessons continued

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Driver's education, waivers, nonpublic school students

Every school district in Iowa must make a driver education course available to resident students (other than students who open enrolled out of the district). Iowa Code section 321.178 states, "Every public school district in Iowa shall offer or make available to all students residing in the school district or Iowa students attending a nonpublic school in the district an approved course in driver education. The receiving district shall be the school district responsible for making driver education available to a student participating in open enrollment under section 282.18."

School districts have authority under section 282.6 to charge tuition and fees for the driver education course that the districts make available. A student who is eligible for a free lunch must be given the full waiver when the student takes the course made available by the district; a student who is eligible for reduced-price lunch must be given the partial waiver when the student takes the course. (Partial waiver should closely mirror the percentage reduction in the student's price of a hot lunch.)

Nonpublic students may qualify for free or reduced-price lunch on the same basis as public school students. Those students may be required to demonstrate eligibility, and this may be by a letter from the nonpublic school or by filling out the appropriate application. Some students, from public and nonpublic schools, apply for fee waiver eligibility for the first time for driver education. If these students qualify for a full or partial waiver, they must be allowed to submit a waiver for all fees going forward, but there is no obligation to return fees already collected.

Finally, a district that chooses to meet its obligation in section 321.178 to provide driver education by contracting with a third party must honor the full or partial waiver for eligible students. (FERPA now allows a district to share eligibility information with a third party provider if the district has a contract with the provider.) However, if a student declines to take a driver education course offered (directly or indirectly) by the student's district and instead chooses to take driver education from an independent source, the student gives up any right to claim a fee waiver for driver education.

Leftovers, money remaining in student lunch accounts

We have received several questions again this year about leftovers: money leftover in a student's meal account or unused punches remaining on a meal ticket. So, it's time to revisit these guidelines:

What must a school do at the end of a school year with money that remains in a student's meal account or unused punches on a meal ticket?

- If a student will be returning to the school the next school year, any remaining money or unused punches must accrue to the benefit of the student for use the next fall. If meal prices will be increasing for the next school year or differ between grade levels, it may be best to refund any remaining ticket value unless the district chooses to honor outstanding punches for a meal even though the cost of those meals is now higher.
- If a student has graduated or will otherwise not be returning, the school must refund the money to the student's parent or guardian. The parent/guardian paid the money in return for the meals. The school may not keep any part of the money if it has not provided all of the meals. To do so is theft.

What if the amount remaining in the account is just a few cents?

- The amount is irrelevant. The money is the property of the parent, not the school.

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Legal Lessons continued

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May a school have a policy to the effect that a refund will be made upon request of a parent/guardian/adult student?

- No. The school cannot put the burden of requesting a refund (for what belongs to the parent anyway) on the parent. The school could give parents the option of receiving a refund or making a donation of the remaining money to the school, but cannot sit back and wait for a parent to make the first move.

How is the remaining money to be returned?

- This can be done at the discretion of the school, as long as the means are reasonable. Different circumstances will determine whether it is reasonable to send a check home with a student versus mailing the check to the parent. If a school sends cash home with a student, the school should take some common sense steps such as documenting that it has done so, putting the money in an envelope with the parent's name on it, making sure that other students are not aware that a student will be carrying home cash, etc. Carefully consider the age and maturity level of the student, as well as safety factors (will this make the student a target of thieves?), before sending cash home with a student.

What about students who are "no shows" with no notice to the school?

- Once a school is reasonably certain that a student will not be returning, the school needs to take reasonable steps to ascertain a forwarding address. If another school makes contact to ask for the student's records, work with that school. If no other school makes such contact, the school holding money that belongs to the student's family may have to work with other public officials (city hall, e.g.) to try to locate the family.
- If, after making reasonable attempts, the school cannot locate the family, the school should ask its accountant and/or auditor how to handle the funds that remain in the student's account.

Direct questions to your area consultant or Patti Harding, a lead consultant at the Department, at 515-281-4754 or patti.harding@iowa.gov.

School safety tips brought to you by the Iowa School Safety Coalition (ISSC)

Access control

This month, the focus is on Access Control and the access to your school buildings. Please see the attached bulletin from ISSC: http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=15359&Itemid=4434

Students with disabilities

For questions regarding students with disabilities, contact Thomas Mayes at 515-242-5614 or thomas.mayes@iowa.gov.

Learning to teach financial literacy

Registration is under way for a free one-day seminar aimed at learning how to effectively teach financial literacy to high school students.

The 13th Annual Conference on Personal Financial Literacy, which is scheduled for July 18 in Ankeny, is sponsored by the Iowa Jump\$tart Coalition. The seminar is aimed at high school educators and will take place at the Des Moines Area Community College Ankeny Campus. To register, go to <http://iowajumpstart.org/whatwedo/personal-financial-literacy-conference/>.

Calendar

June 15 • Nonpublic Transportation Reimbursement Claim

June 19 • Spring SRI Certification Deadline

July 1 • New Joint Employment Whole Grade Sharing application due

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, gender, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d and 2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.). If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number 515/281-5295; or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661, telephone number 312-730-1560, fax 312/730-1576, e-mail: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov



www.educateiowa.gov

Iowa Department of Education

400 E 14th Street
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Ph: 515-281-5294
www.educateiowa.gov